

FIGHT CAPITALISM AND WIN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN PRIZES!

Over the past decade, government agencies around the US have paid out millions upon millions of dollars in settlements resulting from federal and police abuse of activists. And those are only the cases too flagrant to suppress – think how many more must go unreported!

Far from an anomaly, illegal activity in the course of law enforcement is the norm; presumably it would be impossible to maintain law and order without it.

The costs of these violations are figured into government budgets as foregone conclusions. For example, prior to the 2008 Republican National Convention, the Republican National Committee offered \$10 million in advance to cover lawsuits from police misconduct – acknowledging that despite new laws passed specifically for the convention, the desired level of repression would require the authorities to break millions of dollars' worth of their own laws.

In all seriousness, you're not much more likely to win a million-dollar settlement than you are to get your hands on the prizes promised by corporate competitions – and being beaten by police isn't much better than being exploited by the capitalist system in other ways. The point is that even when resistance results in repression and arrest, it doesn't always end in defeat. We should include the battle in the courts in our strategizing, even if we don't believe in the legitimacy of the law any more than our rulers do. In some cities that have recently seen a lot of demonstrations and lawsuits, police departments are more hesitant to beat and arrest protesters.



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"All the friends who were going to skip school with me flaked out at the last minute, so I wasn't with an affinity group when I was arrested. I had to call my dad. It could have been worse — he gave my jailers hell and was careful to keep copies of every piece of paper they made him sign. This came in handy three years later when I heard about the class action lawsuit for the mass arrest. I signed on, then waited ... and waited ... for a long time.

And then we won! Of course, I donated some money to anarchist prisoners and legal support groups. I'd been hearing good things about an upcoming anti-capitalist mobilization overseas, and with only two months to go I bought a plane ticket. I used the money to reinvest myself in the movement and came out committed to a life of struggle towards liberation."

WITH THE ECONOMY STILL UNCERTAIN AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE UNEMPLOYED, AT LEAST THERE'S MONEY TO BE MADE IN RESISTANCE! — AS THEY SAY, GOVERNMENT JOBS ARE THE MOST SECURE DURING A CRISIS.

"When the police raided our bookstore, we made over \$60,000 in less than an hour. That sure is more than my college degree has made me! With the National Governors' Convention coming to town, the authorities feared that we were up to something and preemptively stormed our collective space — only to discover that our most sinister plan was a puppet show. Truth be told, there was absolutely nothing we needed that kind of money for, but it was reassuring to know that the City of Indianapolis wasn't going to use it. So long as there is heart, revolutionary change doesn't need funding. That said, I simply can't wait for my house to be raided again — my son and I need a vacation!"

"Thanks to the NYPD, I'm a ten-thousandaire! At an anti-war demo in New York City, I was arrested while standing on the sidewalk with a bunch of people who were trying to get to a rally. 'Preemptive arrest' is the strategy of choice for cops at big protests, the aim being to stop trouble before it starts. This results in a lot of people going to jail on minor charges based on flimsy or non-existent evidence, then being released after the action is over. After seven hours in jail, I was discharged with a ticket for disorderly conduct and told to show up in court a month later. I hired a lawyer, got the charge dismissed, and filed a lawsuit. A few years later my lawyer called and said I'd been awarded \$15,000 for my seven hours of trouble. It didn't cost me a dime and now I don't have to buy the store brand pasta!"

<i>Seattle – World Trade Organization</i>	1999	\$1.8 million
<i>Washington, DC – IMF/World Bank protests</i>	2000	\$13.7 million
<i>Los Angeles – Democratic National Convention</i>	2000	> \$5 million
<i>Washington, DC – Inauguration</i>	2001	\$685,000
<i>Washington, DC – International Monetary Fund</i>	2002	\$10 million
<i>Miami – Free Trade Area of the Americas ministerial</i>	2003	\$757,000
<i>Oakland – port antiwar protests</i>	2003	> \$2 million
<i>New York – antiwar protests</i>	2003	> \$2 million
<i>New York – Republican National Convention</i>	2004	> \$286,000
<i>Los Angeles – May Day rally</i>	2007	> \$12.85 million

A few recent settlements stemming from police conduct at demonstrations; countless cases are still pending and the list keeps growing.

